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Helping People Help Themselves

June 17- June 30, 2011

\$1

SPARE CHANGE

NEWS



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President and CEO of
Crittenton Womens Union

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RIVER FESTIVAL**

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Spare Change News

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Eat a poor diet, and your health will suffer. Nosh on Nutrient-Rich Foods throughout the day and you will have a stronger immune system.

—Daniel G. Amen, M.D.

Alzheimer's, Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Disease and Obesity (60% of Americans are obese) can be prevented by Changing what you eat to a nutrient rich diet. Disease is not inevitable, it's preventable.

If you eat healthy foods you can avoid a lot of sickness and live a long life. Eat better foods and your body will be healthy and strong.

Start making healthy food choices today.

Christopher Mesfin
Spare Change News

Vision & Mission

Spare Change News was founded in 1992 by a group of homeless people and a member of Boston Jobs with Peace. *Spare Change* is published by the nonprofit organization The Homeless Empowerment Project (HEP).

SPARE CHANGE'S GOAL:

"To present, by our own example, that homeless and economically disadvantaged people, with the proper resources, empowerment, opportunity, and encouragement are capable of creating change for ourselves in society."

HEP'S OBJECTIVES:

To empower the economically disadvantaged in Greater Boston through self-employment, skill development and self-expression. To create forums, including those of independent media in order to reshape public perception of poverty and homelessness.

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SUMMER VACATIONS FOR 2011



18 Year Reflection:

What has the Spare change Newspaper done for me?

Chris Mesfin
Spare Change News

First and foremost, I would like to say that it is an honor and a privilege to answer the question, "What has the Spare Change Newspaper done for me?" Since 1993, Spare Change has provided me with the opportunity to work for an income. The newspaper also taught me a lot about life and people, and why I thought and did the dysfunctional things that I did; and it has helped me return to a normal way of thinking and behaving.

Prior to joining Spare Change News, I did not understand that my personality had been developed by traumatic events in my life, and that how I was living was the result of those events. I also started developing my spirituality—before I joined the newspaper, I did not know God. I am now a Christian and I love being a Christian. It was rough and tough in my life prior to joining Spare Change. I was a cocaine addict living on the streets of Boston, Massachusetts. The drugs had me in bondage. I was going nowhere fast.

I first found out about Spare

Change at the end of 1993, from a vendor at the Hynes Convention Center T station. He suggested that I go to the Old Baptist Church in Cambridge and sign up to be a vendor. He also said that they would give me ten free papers for doing so. I went and signed up, and it turned out to be better than I ever imagined.

I started out selling Spare Change outside of Filene's Basement at Downtown Crossing. As soon as I began, I started connecting with customers, meeting people, and realizing that I could earn an income.

Joining Spare Change and becoming a Christian suddenly opened my eyes. My behavior started improving. I not only started to see how much of a mess my life was in and how I needed to change for the better, I also discovered that I had a gift for helping others with their behavior and problems. I understood, however, that before I could help anyone else, I had to work on changing myself first. I had to become a better person so that I could be a powerful example of a person that could stop using drugs. I wanted to get off the streets, receive housing and

strive on a daily basis to be the best person I could be.

In 1995, I went into treatment for drug abuse. I was now in recovery, learning about myself even more. I became willing to do the footwork necessary to stop using drugs and become a better person. I strived to learn about myself and I was willing to let people help me with the process. I started to understand that I needed to stay in a learning mode. I needed to listen to the people that were helping me. I believed it was easy for me to change. I wanted to change, I desired change. Changing for the better fascinated me. For certain people, changing our behavior is difficult because we don't want to face the truth about ourselves.

Selling Spare Change has taught me a lot about people. When I sell the paper, the most important rule for me is that I must be polite and respectful at all times, displaying a good positive attitude. I have applied this to other aspects of my life as well, and I try to keep a good attitude at all times.

In January 2011, Spare Change promoted me to distribution

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Q&A With Beth Babcock

President and CEO of Crittenton Womens Union

Chalkey Horenstein
Spare Change News

Beth Babcock is the president and CEO of Crittenton Women's Union and has studied the effects of poverty on executive functioning. Under Babcock's direction, Crittenton Women's Union is currently researching methods of coaching to positively affect impoverished adults. Earlier this month, Chalkey Horenstein spoke with Ms. Babcock, who explained the meaning of executive functioning and the effects poverty has on it.

Chalkey Horenstein: *What first got you interested in poverty research?*

Beth Babcock: My entire career has been in the leadership of nonprofit programs, whether it's a community health center or an elderly homeless center. What's at the issue at all these non-profit organizations is providing access to a good or service for people too poor to buy it in the open market — that's what nonprofit work is. Poverty is the underlying issue, no matter what they do.

CH: *So how is the educational development of a child in poverty different from one in a more well-off setting?*

BB: I work very closely with Dr. Jack Shonkoff, M.D., the head of the Harvard Center on the Developing Child. His book — "Neurons to Neighborhoods," which was published ten years ago — was the first book to talk in a public way about the effects of "toxic stress of poverty" on childhood development. What Jack and his other researchers found is that children who are raised in poverty have their brain development — their actual brain physical development, altered by poverty.

The areas that are most impacted are the areas of the brain that control what we call "executive functioning skills." They are the skills of impulse control, priority setting, organization, and management of long-term goals.



These skills are what teachers refer to as "the readiness skills for learning," and teachers will tell you that these are very important to begin to teach a child in a classroom. They're the skills that let a kid stay still in a chair, work well with others in a classroom setting, keep track of their work, and understand how persistence plays out in getting really good at something.

There are actually studies done on young children that show that in early settings, if you have one class (from the same background economically), trained in reading and math, and the other is taught in executive functioning skills, the children with the executive functioning training end up reading better than the kids with the reading training.

also try to help them to become the best that they can be as they live their lives. If I can say something to someone to help them, I'm going to do that. If someone needs somebody to listen to them, I will listen.

In addition to working as distribution manager, I also recently started working on "Chris' Quote Corner", which can be

CH: *So how does this research help your efforts now?*

BB: It gives us an idea of how we can help children in poverty learn better. We can introduce this into many different settings, like daycare, summer camp, classes. How we can introduce executive functioning coaching in ways we haven't up until now. Maybe we haven't been doing something we could be doing to make children's outcomes better.

But it's more exciting for reasons than that. One of the things that's most interesting about the executive functioning areas of the brain are that these areas of the brain keep growing or have the potential to keep growing the latest of any of the brain areas. You can grow executive functioning wiring in adults all the way into adulthood. Those areas

found on page two of every new issue.

God is good. I always ask God to put me into a situation that allows me to help people. It is a blessing to help the vendors become the best that they can be. I am available. I am here to serve. I have a beautiful apartment that I am grateful for. I have become better at helping others be better and I always

of the brain grow the longest of any area of the brain.

For example: if a child is locked up where no one speaks to them, and they never learn speech — there have been kids who have had this happen, unfortunately — they didn't develop language. Once you are a teenager, if you have not developed language before the age of sixteen or so, the amount of language you can learn at that point is very limited. You'll never have a full vocabulary or full speech development. If that part of the brain is not developed by that point — if they do not keep learning more language — they can't really be built up normally. But executive functioning is not like that; they can be built way into adulthood. This is something very exciting because we can not only help children, but we can help adults in things that have set them back in their career already.

CH: *Talk more about the "toxic stress of poverty." Could you explain that a bit?*

BB: To be clear, this isn't to blame families of poverty; this is merely the reality of what our society has done. The families in poverty are not to be blamed for why this is stressful. Parents in poverty are not worse parents than people who are rich. Parents in poverty have lives that are very stressful, by virtue of not knowing where food is coming from, or where rent is coming from — the lack of ease that people who are wealthier have. This is what causes problems with children. Parts of the brain just shut down in defense to protect against that stress.

What Dr. Shonkoff and his team found is that poverty causes the area that creates the executive functioning skills to not become as developed. The science around it suggests that the environments are so stressful that the brain protects itself from building out — if it did build out, it would be even more stressful than it already is. They

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manager. I now work in the office, selling the newspaper and helping the vendors on a regular basis. I must say, I love the job. I work with the vendors, helping them with the problems they may have while selling the paper. I encourage the vendors to be the best that they can be. I

lead by example. I leave you with this: I can live without anything in this world, but I cannot live without my Christian way of life. I can't be a success apart from God. I love the Spare Change Newspaper; it has helped me to be the person that I am today.

Shooting for a Cure

Liam Cunningham
Spare Change News

Most people probably don't know what 'Fragile X' is. But those who do are affected by it profoundly. Jim Vershbow is one of those people.

Vershbow has a son who has Fragile X syndrome, which is an inherited form of mental retardation and a common cause of autism. 1 in 4,000 males are affected by the syndrome as are 1 in 6-8,000 women.

Having a son diagnosed with the syndrome caused hardships for Vershbow and his family, but fifteen years ago, Jim, his wife, and a close group of friends decided to get proactive about finding a cure for the disease.

The group decided to utilize a shared passion as a means of raising money for research: basketball. "Patrick's Pals" is a non-profit organization founded in 2008 with the mission of "giving children with multiple disabilities an opportunity to flourish in their individualized way." On June 4th, the annual Patrick's Pals 3-on-3 basketball tournament was

held at the Buckingham Brown and Nickels school in Cambridge.

"We came up with an idea, wanted to do something to help, that's how the idea for the 3-on-3 basketball tournament was formed. It was three of us who had been friends since we were teenagers, played ball together, this was kind of a natural offspring," said Vershbow. "It's a way to raise money, stay in touch, and have fun. All the money we raise goes to an organization called FRAXA."

FRAXA is a grassroots organization founded and run by Fragile X families. According to their website, the organization's mission is "to accelerate progress toward effective treatments and ultimately a cure for Fragile X, by directly funding the most promising research."

"FRAXA is an incredible group. It was started by three parents with kids with Fragile X back in 1994, who were frustrated because there was no one working on raising awareness and money aggressively to find cure for Fragile X," said Vershbow. "FRAXA was born with the idea that they were going to raise money

and get scientists to do research. Since their founding, they have raised over \$20 million and done incredible research as a result. Now they are on the right path to finding a cure."

Each year, sixteen three-player teams participate in the basketball tournament. The minimum age is 16. Along with the tournament, there is a memorabilia auction and special guests at each year's tournament. This year's special guest was Steve Donahue, a basketball coach at Boston College.

"Steve spoke to the group in the morning and did a wonderful job. He donated a couple of different things to the auction, including the opportunity for one of the kids to be a ball boy at a BC game," said Vershbow.

Each year's tournament is a great fundraising success. According to Vershbow, this year's event was no different.

"We always have a lot of generous people getting involved. This year we had a full bracket, all 32 teams participated. It was a great day. When all was said and done, around \$30,000 to

\$35,000 was raised. That's typically where we get to."

According to Vershbow, equally important to the monetary component of the fundraising is raising awareness about the relatively unknown disease. He is proud of the progress that has been made since the mid-1990s in spreading knowledge about the syndrome.

"The goal has always been to raise awareness because Fragile X is something that a lot of people don't have in their lives and don't know about. There is just not a lot of information out there. It wasn't so far along in the mid-1990s."

Vershbow hopes that the progress towards finding a cure will continue into the future across the world.

"Were just one piece throughout the world to fund the research. We just want to raise awareness about the tournament and about Fragile X," said Vershbow.

To find out more about Fragile X syndrome or to donate to FRAXA for scientific research, visit www.fraxa.org/about.aspx.

To learn more about Patrick's Pals, visit www.patrickspalsfoundation.com.

Opening Doors: Waltham bookstore's mission of empowering and challenging youths is more than just words

Robert Sondak
Spare Change News

For one Waltham bookstore, the mission of empowering and challenging youths is more than just words.

More Than Words (MTW) is a Waltham-based bookstore dedicated to helping teens with their education and personal lives. More Than Words provides job coaching and training in skills development, public speaking and public presentation, and tutoring for teens seeking a high school diploma and a path to self-sufficiency.

MTW was founded in 2004 as a Teen Leadership, Employment and Enrichment Program (LEEP). It began as an online bookselling venture that provided employment and entrepreneurial training for teens in the foster care system. This program was established by Jodi Rosenbaum, a Teach For America alumni with experience in the

child welfare and juvenile justice system.

The pilot program began in a small Watertown office with a staff of four young men from a Department of Families and Children group home, a few laptop computers and a bookshelf full of donated books. In two months, they moved out of necessity to a larger 650-square foot space.

In June of 2005, Teen LEEP moved to a storefront location at 376 Moody Street in Waltham and changed its name to More Than Words. This street-level space allowed MTW to increase the number of youths served as well as to add training for skills in retail management, events planning and customer service.

"We have slots for 24 to 30 youths to work at any given time," said Sharon Small, Marketing and Development Coordinator for More Than Words. "The staff changes constantly."

In 2006, MTW developed a transitional program with the goal of helping youths to move out of the bookstore and into meaningful outside jobs and even college, while also providing outside support to ensure their success.

In 2008, MTW expanded its retail online operation to include a café training program. MTW developed a partnership with the Starbucks national coffee chain. Starbucks provided donated equipment and supplies for the startup, and now subsidizes the cost of coffee and supplies and provides pro-bono training. MTW also developed partnerships with national culinary non-profit organizations Kitchen with a Mission and Fare Start to facilitate this startup program.

MTW has also developed a two-tier approach for job training and youth development that is referred to as a social innovation model. Teens work as part of a team that manages the book-

store 20 to 30 hours a week and is integrated in all operation areas. For the "business" job portion of the program, youths facilitate peer-led training and weekly team meetings, track and forecast business finances, manage both online and in-store café sales, conduct guided tours, host events and community workshops, and manage marketing and promotions. This job provides youths with marketable job skills including public speaking, technology use, inventory control and customer service.

In addition to the "business" job youths do the "you" job, working on their personal goals in three main areas; education, employment and self-sufficiency. Youths also work with a transition manager to help them achieve their personal goals, such as obtaining an ID, opening a bank account and finding housing.

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Home is where the Heart is

Tammy Anne Callahan
Spare Change News



The opening lines of John Howard Payne's 1823 opera, "Clari, Maid of Milan", begins with, "Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam /

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 41% of today's homeless are families. It is these families that are no longer familiar with the word "home", and with today's economy, there are more and more families on the edge due to foreclosures, evictions, job loss, and depleted affordable housing. Disruption of the American family is devastating, but with the help of a shelter, a family's lives can be put back together. Yet "home, sweet home" is really what is needed in order to secure other things, such as jobs and education, for a family to succeed.

In 2006, my own family was living on the financial edge. With no safety net and existing week-to-week, the rent we owed was increasing dramatically due to a lack of funds and affordable housing. Finally, in February, we were evicted and were forced to leave our home and the city I grew up in. Abandoning everything we

had accumulated over a 17-year period, we packed one bag per family member and, with a feeling of shell shock, walked out the door to a new city and a new life. We were blessed not to be catapulted into the streets like some families; however, we hesitantly ventured through the doors of a family shelter. A place that sheltered us, yet it was not our home; it was our refuge, where we contributed domesticated affection to our household and our family. In time, we did manage to move back to Salem, MA, and I recall my husband painting our daughter's bedroom her favorite color--pink. It became a place where, after a long day, we could rest our tired bodies and tired souls, a place where we could sleep at night feeling safe and secure, a place where we could have meals together and have our pets that we loved. Most importantly it was a place we could call ours to decorate with the personal items of our lives; it was home.

Throughout the years we have encountered the bangs and bumps that life gives to us all. Most of our hardship was caused by our financial burden--having to pay our rent at times became one of our main stressors. With no Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program available for us, we did manage, yet it was an uphill battle that to this day I wonder how we survived. My children are now grown and on their own and

my husband and I are currently empty nesters that still live on one income. But at least we are housed in an affordable studio; a place that we feel and a place that we still call home. Home is a physical and emotional place, yet having a home also creates self-actualization through jobs, education, and health services which help all of us as individuals to reach our potential.

Reaching one's potential is necessary for adults, and especially for children who will grow into adults who will benefit both themselves and society. Physiological needs such as air, water, food, clothing, and shelter are literal needs for human survival, at the most basic level. The next level includes physical safety and financial and personal security. Only when all of these physical needs are met will everything else fall into place, such as friendship, intimacy, family life, and motivation. Personal motivation is the inspiration for employment, furthering one's education, and increasing one's sense of empowerment.

I personally witnessed inspiration in my daughter as she grew into a young woman who dreamed of working as a hair stylist. I remember her daily trips from Revere, MA to Salem, MA, via the MBTA bus and then from Salem to Middleton via the school bus to attend school at the North Shore Technical High School. Somehow, my daughter

kept the pace of those daily travels for almost a year until we moved back to Salem permanently. My young daughter developed motivation in her own room that was painted pink, with her personal items decorating her shelves and her walls. I know she succeeded in her dream of working at a salon and obtaining her Massachusetts State License because her potential was fulfilled in a place called home.

American families need a place to call home, a permanent place to live so that everything else like jobs, education, and health services will follow. When an individual's needs are met, then and only then are they able to meet the needs of others. Most importantly, their needs being met leads to success for themselves and for us all. True success will be achieved when homeless families have housing that is affordable and a real home where their hearts reside.

Tammy Anne Callahan-Callanan is a mother and grandmother who lives in Salem. She majored in creative writing and English literature at Salem State University. She writes columns regularly for the, sparechangenews, Salem Gazette and other publications. Find her on Facebook by searching for Salempoet's Writing Page.

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see the bumpiness of this life, and they feel it, and the brain does not build up the areas that would take all that in and work around it. That's just too much stress for a child's life.

Children who are raised in wealthy homes who also have toxicity in their homes for reasons other than poverty — parents who have domestic violence — can also have these symptoms too. With rich kids, it doesn't happen as consistently. Being poor is stressful, and it affects the physical health and well-being of a family. There are diseases poor families get more than wealthy families. The body as a biological organism is affected by poverty in both adults and children. The fear, the lack of predictability, and the kind of pressure on time — and managing the world with not enough money — it's a stressful thing that causes physical changes in adults and children.

CH: How does this affect the children down the road?

BB: What appears to happen to them is that they have a harder time in school, almost from the get-go. They are disad-

vantaged in the readiness skills to go to school. As they progress in school they continue to be disadvantaged, and as they move ahead they can be disadvantaged for lack of executive functioning skills. It compounds how difficult their world is.

The toxic stress of poverty, along with its effects on executive functioning, is part of why we say in the United States that poverty is "sticky." What economists mean by "sticky" is that a child who is born into poverty is six times more likely to stay in poverty their entire lives than a child not born into poverty is likely to become impoverished. The reason is partly in the help that families can give their kids — money, etc. — but it also has to do with the way poverty affects and traps people.

CH: In what ways are things being changed to work with this issue?

BB: I think certainly the government is beginning to be more aware of these issues of executive functioning and the toxic stress of poverty, especially with children. There will be more opportunities to design and test and increase the impact of traditional childhood set-

tings. Schools, daycares — we'll see a movement in all of these environments. We already are seeing this, and I think this will be a big issue as a next decade.

What is not changing is that there is not a lot of research done to intervene and help adults, even despite the fact that their executive functioning can still grow and develop.

CH: So that is where Crittenton is coming in?

BB: My organization is designing programs that are designed to coach executive functioning. The progress reports we are running are showing very good results. The programs we are designing are developing what we call "executive functioning scaffolding." We teach people how to use executive functioning tools that start as problem-solving and goal-setting tools that overtime become something inside the person. We're teaching them to use external tools, and with time and coaching they become internal skills. So far, our early results are very good.

CH: What can people read for more

information?

BB: Harvard Center on the Developing Child has a really excellent website. There is one paper on this website that does an excellent job, called "Building The Brain Air-Traffic Control System." The Harvard Center on the Developing Child website has a whole bunch of wonderful articles, but that's one that's really good. They also have information on what the government is starting to do on this.

CH: Any final thoughts that you would like Spare Change readers to hear?

BB: Poverty has really changed over the past 10-15 years. It used to be that if you got a job, the chances were good that the job could support you — those days are gone. Recent studies show that 40% of the jobs in Mass won't support the family.

We're a knowledge-based economy now — those with knowledge-based skills can support themselves. Poverty is different, and so our approach has to be different; we have to learn how to get new families into this knowledge-based economy.

Gaining Perspective: An Experience from “Rock Bottom”

John Doe
Spare Change News

Sitting here in the public library to make use of the free computer, trying to think of the story I want to tell this week seems almost impossible. The fact is that over the past month, since I’ve become homeless, I have learned more than at any other point in my life.

I’ve learned more about myself, my fellow man, our weaknesses, our strengths, and our uncanny ability to adapt in just about any situation.

Just a month ago I was terrified. I had awakened from what seems like a ten-year dream, and everything that I had was gone. Now in all fairness I did see it coming, for a long time, but my PTSD and severe depression just wouldn’t allow me to do anything about it. I never sought the help I needed, until finally one day I was standing in the street, with everything I owned, wondering where to begin to put my life back together. It was the single most terrifying moment of my life. Yet now, when I look back at it only a month later, I realize it was probably the best day of my life.

I say this because sadly, that is what it took for me to finally seek help. I say it because it was the day that my eyes were truly opened, as if for the first time.

Going forward with a “normal” life, you are blind to so much around you, and you are sheltered by preset notions of stereotypes and the very small parameters of your understanding of the people around you.

It took my losing everything to real-

ize the difference between things that we want and things that we need. It took losing everything to see the humanity around me. Losing everything made me able to see the beauty in something like watching someone recently out of jail, standing nervously in front of a group of men, struggling through reading a passage from the bible that he had been practicing since 5 a.m. I knew that this person was trying harder to fix his life and find peace than most people would ever work at anything. However, most people would clutch their bag when passing him on the street.

It took this disaster for me to understand what people with addictions really go through on a daily basis just trying to stay clean. Sure, it’s easy for us to say they choose to do it, but after talking with them and seeing the truth and suffering in their eyes, I realized it’s just not that simple.

There’s also the very concept of honesty. When we are brought down to this level, there is nothing left to hide. The stories that I’ve been privileged to hear, and even the raw truth I’ve shared with others, are on a whole new level than I’ve ever shared with anyone. When all of us as a group have nothing left to lose, nothing more to hide, and no reason for secrets and inadequacies, the truth becomes something that you’re more comfortable with down here at “the bottom” then you ever possibly could be living a “normal” life. The freedom and the power that comes with this is mind-blowing. The clarity that you suddenly have is truly a gift, and raises the ques-

tion of what do you now do with this new knowledge and clarity.

This is a question that I ask myself on a daily basis now. Once I’m housed and back on my feet, can I simply just move on like it never happened? Will I once again be able to go about my day pretending that everything is good, and that those less fortunate don’t need our help? What about the people who don’t have the basic things they need to regain their lives, simply because they don’t know to seek the help they need? Can I simply move forward and be comfortable saying, “They’ll work it out”? I really don’t see how.

Since my time in the shelter, I’ve moved through about a 6-month process of paperwork in two weeks, just because I know how to do the homework. Now that I find myself in this holding pattern waiting for my stuff to get processed, I’ve taken to helping others get a leg up as well. In the past two weeks I have taken five people down to the Dept. of Transitional Assistance. These are people that are hungry—they have case workers, yet don’t realize that they can have \$200 a month in food stamps. There are also people that are stuck waiting months for simple tests at clinics, not realizing that they can have Mass Health and go to the hospital.

While the experience as a whole is wildly frustrating, I feel at this point that for me to just sit back and not help is negligence, and would almost make me part of the problem.

I’m not saying everyone has to go

out and help someone, and I’m not even saying that everyone can be helped. However, when you see opportunities in life to do simple things that can make a huge impact on another human being, there comes a point where we have to feel some sense of obligation. If we don’t, then that is in a way our own insecurity and weakness that we have to deal with.

The people I’ve met and the friendships I’ve formed since I hit “bottom” are more genuine than those I’ve experienced in my previous life. The self awareness I now have is stronger than at any other point in my life, and the compassion and understanding of my fellow man is a new gift that I’m still adapting to. This would be considered the “rock bottom” part of my life, yet I cannot think of a more rewarding time in my life.

A wonderful doctor in New York taught me a very valuable lesson. What you need is always there. The “wants” in life are something completely different. I look forward to getting back to more of the things that I want, but right now I have everything I need, and helping someone else get what they need just now seems more important. I hope you see this one day as well, without having to hit the bottom. We’ll all be better people because of it.

So as the late George Carlin once said, “Take care of yourself, and take care of someone else.”

For now, still John Doe
www.BostonHomeless.Blogspot.com

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“The ‘business’ and ‘you’ jobs occur at the same time,” said Small. “The program runs 6 to 12 months.”

Small elaborated about the MTW transition managers’ work and responsibility.

“Transition managers are similar to a social worker,” said Small. “Transition managers do case management and facilitate transition shifts that involve youths working on their personal milestones. All outside education work includes GED, high school, college and trade school. This falls under the ‘you’ job.”

After their transition from the “business” and the “you” jobs, MTW stays in touch with youths for at least two years to help support them.

The youths that participate in the MTW program are referred to the bookstore in one of several ways. State agencies such as DFC and the Department of Mental Health can refer youths to the program. In addition to these state agencies, group homes, social workers and local probation officers can also refer people to the program.

“The state Department of Families and Children is one of the primary youth

referrals,” said Small.

According to Small, youths come to MTW from all over metro Boston. Three of the biggest cities with youth participation in the program include Waltham, Cambridge and Somerville. Other local cities with high enrollment include Watertown, Newton and Arlington.

MTW activities surround a theory of change focus. This is an intention model that supports teens as they grow and move towards three essential goals for individual success. Goal one is employment providing stability, pay and growth. Goal two is education and includes attain-

ment of a high school diploma, GED, and/or college. Goal three includes managing actions plans for self-efficiency.

According to the website, MTW is in touch with 70 percent of the youth they have trained or are currently training. Approximately 82 percent of past youths have gone on to obtain a GED and 75 percent are engaged in fulltime work or education.

“MTW has a higher percentage of success than the foster care system,” said Small. “We must be doing something right.”

Poems by students of
Rosie’s Creative Writing Class taught by Tara.

Tears

By J & F

Tears, a lifetime’s worth. Both happy and sad, frightened, painful tears. That’s the framework, tears.
The tears of a mother giving birth represent both joy and pain, but hopefully, love. Can tears be used to measure time?
Broken piece to be fixed, healing of a broken heart. A set of twins—
Yes, a double blessing in time, or on time. Don’t give up on you. Daytime or Nighttime.

Butterflies

By S.V.

When I feel sad I take time to be grateful for the positive blessings in my life.
When I am sad I try to recreate a moment in my mind filled with babies, lullabies, butterflies and angel’s wings.
When I most need love I can find it in many ways: Laughter, birds singing, or just a daydream about the way things will be or the way I want them to be.
Laughter can fill the rooms—while Tears are something hidden inside.

Roots

By F and J

The little girl had something, always something inside—as you can see the roots. It was a dream of having just peace.
The roots of the tree of life flow through everything, nurturing, peaceful, loving. Time passes but this never changes.
Time passes slowly and peacefully with each day’s beginning and ending light and dark, sunrise and sunset.
Oh, the joy, the provocation of survival of any and every level.

PHOTO / LITTLE WANDERERS



Poems may be submitted to: Marc D. Goldfinger,
76 Unity Ave. Belmont MA, 02478

or email: sparechangepoetry@gmail.com. SCN cannot return poetry
submissions, and authors will be contacted only if their poems are published.

Every Thursday
Squawk Coffeehouse, 9 pm
1555 Mass Ave., Cambridge
Open mike for poets and musicians.
Every Saturday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$3-5 suggested donation.
671- 354-5287

Every Sunday
Lizard Lounge Poetry Slam, 7 pm
1667 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
\$5. 671- 547-0759
Every Monday
Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm
106 Prospect St., Cambridge
\$4 suggested donation.
617-354-5287

Every Wednesday
Boston Poetry Slam, 8 pm
Cantab Lounge, 738 Mass. Ave.,
Cambridge
\$3. 21+. 617-354-2685
Second Thursday of Every Month
Tapestry of Voices, 6:30 pm
Borders, 10 School St., Boston
Free. 617-557-7188

Second Tuesday of Every Month
Newton Free Library, 7 pm
330 Homer St. 617-796-1360
Third Saturday of Every Month
Boston Haiku Society meeting,
2-6 pm
Kaji Aso Studio,
40 St. Stephen St., Boston
\$3. 617-247-1719

Poetry event listings may be
submitted to
sceditor@homelessempowerment.org

Cambridge River Festival

Michael Simpson
Spare Change News

Spare Change writer Michael Simpson and photographer Amanda Vivican attended The Cambridge River Festival on June 4, 2011.

Amanda and I arrived at the River Festival around 3:30 p.m. and people were all along the Charles River. There were vendors and artists and stage actors, band members, clothing merchants selling their wares, and people enjoying themselves.

Amanda and I were there to take pictures of this yearly event and do a few interviews with some of the people who were there. It was not very hard for us to get them to open up to us.

The first was a group of people from the Dragon Boat Club. One of the members I got a chance to talk with was a man named Jim. He told me that he had been with the rowing club six years and he was its main rower. Jim told me that part of his job as a rower is to keep count and make sure that all of the oars are in sync so that the boat can move with the beat of the drummer. Jim is also blind, but still knows his way around a row boat as well as those of us who can see.

Amanda and I found that it was much better to just take pictures than to do interviews, so we went around to find what was on display. The pictures we took are included with this story.



PHOTOS / AMANDA VIVICAN

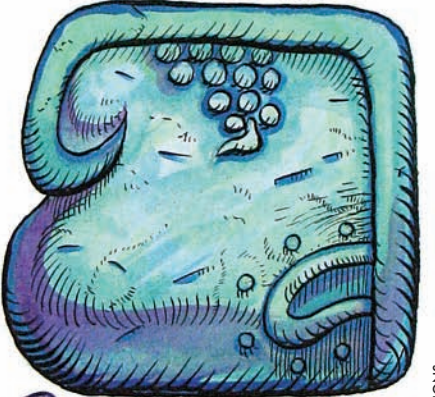


Little Wanderers Express Voices and Visions

Artwork from The Home for Little Wanderers' annual Voices & Visions fundraiser, attended by more than 1,000 people at the Seaport World Trade Center on the evening of May 25 to celebrate the creative artwork and writing of children served by The Home's resi-

dential programs. All of the artwork at the event was influenced by this year's theme: Cultures of the World. The artwork was organized based on the geographic region that inspired each particular collection. These areas of influence included: North America and

the Islands, Europe and Asia, Mexico and South America, Africa, Easterland and Egypt, and Australia Oceania. The Home is a private non-profit child and family service agency based in Boston.



ARTWORK / HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS / VOICES AND VISIONS

Voices From The Streets

Voices from the Streets — a forum for those whose voices are too often ignored. From narratives to opinion to advice, these writers portray a unique perspective on life that might otherwise go unnoticed. Below, find that turning an ear towards those normally silenced opens the door to understanding and relating to those who have faced life on the street.

Fancy Dancing With Sherman Alexie, A Spokane Indian



Marc D. Goldfinger
Spare Change News

One of my favorite movies of all time is called "The Business of FancyDancing" and it was written and directed by Sherman Alexie.

Sherman Alexie is an Indian. He does not like the term Native American because he feels it was made up by new American Liberals and really doesn't define anything.

Another one of his books that was made into a movie was called "Smoke Signals" and is more well-known; however, I have not seen it. I have read his book called "Indian Killer" and it proudly bears his signature from when I heard him read from it at UMass Boston.

Sherman Alexie had a powerful presence and, at the time of the reading, had hair that hung halfway down his back. He said, at the beginning of the reading, "No, you cannot touch my hair." Two other books he has written are "Reservation Blues" and "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven." "Indian Killer" was published in 1996 and, in the book, a serial killer is slaying and scalping white men in Seattle. It was quite an interesting story. I'll say no more; the book is still available if you look hard enough and it's worth the search.

I have "The Business of Fancy Dancing," the movie, on VHS and until recently had two working VHS players. Now I only have one because one destructed. Thank God it did not have "FancyDancing" in it when it happened because I would have lost the movie.

I began searching for a DVD of the movie, starting with Newbury Comics. They did not have one and had no record of having it since 2005. This was a bad sign.

My next step was to go onto Amazon. There it was! Unfortunately, the cheapest one I could find was over \$40. That meant I had to treasure my VHS and pray it did not break because this is a movie I like to watch over and over again.

"The Business of FancyDancing" is about the Spokane Indian Reservation or "the Rez," as the Indians who live there call it. Two Indians, Seymour and Aristotle, are best friends and graduate high school together with another buddy named "Mouse."

Seymour and Aristotle go off to college in

the white world of Seattle. When they ask Mouse what he is going to do, he says, with a smirk, "I am going to work in the uranium mines."

It is 16 years later. Seymour is a successful gay poet who does many readings about Indians on the 'Rez,' and Aristotle lives back on the reservation after angrily leaving school and breaking friendship with Seymour.

Aristotle and Mouse hang together, huff gas, drink heavily, and Mouse gives a demonstration on how to eat a bathroom spray cleaner sandwich on white bread. Mouse dies of an overdose of something. Maybe that sandwich.

Seymour, living with a white lover, receives a phone call in the middle of the night. He tells his lover to answer the phone and, reluctantly, he answers the phone, speaks for a few minutes, hangs up and rolls over without saying anything.

Seymour says, "Well, who was it?" His lover says it was for you. Seymour says, "But what was it about?" The lover says, "One of your friends, Mouse, has died on the reservation and they want you to come to the funeral." Seymour rolls over, tears in his eyes.

It sounds as if I am revealing what the movie is about but I am not. The movie consists of flashbacks, flashforwards, and beautiful scenes of Indians Ghost Dancing. Seymour was supposed to be a Ghost Dancer but he left his Indian ways behind.

There are wonderful scenes of Seymour doing readings, signings, and Ghost Dancing. There are scenes of Aristotle and Mouse doing their thing on the reservation. When Seymour first arrives at Seattle he takes a woman lover who is also an Indian.

The scene where Seymour tells her he is gay is extremely moving and, just because I tell you it takes place that does not ruin the scene. Like I said, I have seen this movie at least 10 times and I see more each time I watch it.

This movie is worth searching for. It is worth paying \$40 to own it if you can afford it. If you are searching for blood and guts, this is not the movie for you. It is a powerfully emotional tale of love and loss, and love and gain, and the place of the American Indian in the United States.

Sherman Alexie is a man who is touched by genius. He was born on October 7th, 1966 on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Pinit, Washington, that is, the state. Sherman Alexie is a Spokane/Couer d'Alene/ tribe member and is also an American.

Alexie was born with hydrocephalus and had seizures throughout his childhood. I believe he doesn't have them anymore.

His works have been translated into more than 10 other languages. The latest books I am aware of are "War Dances" and "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian," an autobiography of sorts, which were published in 2009. War Dances won the PEN/Faulkner Award in 2010.

Another recent book is called "Face," which was published in 2009 also, this book by the Hanging Loose Press.

Of the books I have read I was impressed with his deep sense of tragic humor and his awareness of the Indian's place in our sick society. We're working on it folks.

Other awards earned by Sherman Alexie are the American Book Award, the National Book Award, and the PEN/Hemingway award. I've placed an order for "War Dances" over Amazon but you can probably find it at the Harvard Book Store, which I frequent quite often. If they don't have it they will gladly order it for you.

Sherman Alexie is the type of writer that makes me jealous. His works are profound and if you see "The Business of FancyDancing," which was based on his first book, you will see what I mean. I literally cried and laughed out loud during the movie and I'm going to watch it again.

It gives a humorous tragic look at life on the 'rez. Anything written by Sherman Alexie I give a giant thumbs up. He is a modern writer who cannot be ignored.

"When the great Indian novel is finally written, all the white people will be Indians, and all the Indians will be Ghosts." -- Sherman Alexie, The Business of FancyDancing.

Marc D. Goldfinger is a formerly homeless vendor who is now housed. He can be reached at junkietroll@yahoo.com. Marc also has books on www.smashwords.net that can be downloaded for \$2.99.



Editor's note

Due to a personal issue James was unable to write his column for this issue. However, he would like readers to know that he's doing well and will be back in time for the next issue.

Health Watch:

Why Your Teeth Could Be Killing You

Jacques Fleury
Spare Change News



My motivation for writing this article is simple: to alert people about the correlation between poor dental hygiene and systemic pathology like Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and what you can do to protect yourself.

First and foremost, I do not profess to be a medical doctor nor am I a health and wellness expert. However, I do have a medical background, understanding and personal experiences that I think are applicable to the subject matter of which I will attempt to write about. I have completed one year at Mass Bay Community College's Nursing Program which included Fundamentals of Nursing, Biology I & II, Anatomy and Physiology, Nutrition, Microbiology and Medical Terminology just to name a few before I changed my major to Liberal Arts and transferred to UMass Boston upon graduation.

The other criteria of which I think is of critical importance in writing this article is that my father recently died of CHD and his doctors concluded that there was an undeniable connection between his heart disease and his poor dental hygiene. My brother—who took care of dad and who is also a medical doctor specializing in cardiology—was in agreement with his medical contemporaries regarding the link between dad's neglect of his teeth and gums and his heart disease. My father—who was a professional man with his own business in Haiti—neglected to take care of his teeth for years. Even as one spoke to him, one could see the debris of bacteria nesting like yellow swirls in his teeth and gums but no one dared to tell him about it; that is until it was too late.

Based on my own personal experience I've noticed that a lot of people here in America do not consider going to the dentist or dental hygienist on a regular basis. People are often leery of the dentist with their dreadful drills that triggers shivers of fear and anxiety in their patients. I've seen some of my acquaintances; friends and even family members lose some of their teeth due to poor dental care. To prove my point, even health insurance providers like Mass Health who offer medical coverage to the disabled and families with dependent children only recently offered dental coverage to their participants. I suppose they did not consider "dental care" as a necessary part of the general physical and preventive health maintenance ideology. Mass Health has narrowed their dental coverage to only

include mostly preventive care such as, but not limited to, regular cleanings and check-ups.

I would not be writing about this subject had I not been able to relate it to myself. I have been maintaining regular dental hygiene appointments for years now, every six months to be exact. Even more diligently since I've lost my dad to heart disease back in 2005.

"Over the past decade, an increasing amount of research have been conducted that supports the association between periodontal diseases and systemic disease," declares Mea A. Weinberg, DMD, MSD, RPH, a clinical associate professor of Periodontology and Implant Dentistry at New York University in her article, "The Fire Within: The Link between oral inflammation and systemic health has signaled a paradigm shift in treating the periodontal patient." She goes on to say that, "The role that inflammation plays as a pathway to the rest of the body is becoming much better understood, making the control and prevention of gingivitis and periodontitis a critical part of optimal patient care." Because new research have come to light to illuminate these silent potential killers known as gingivitis and periodontitis (which in laymen's terms means inflammation of the gum tissue surrounding the teeth), more people are becoming aware and paying more attention to their own esoteric practice of dental hygiene. "The oral cavity is the portal to the rest of the body," states Weinberg, "...an emerging body of evidence has linked oral infections—primarily chronic inflammatory periodontitis—to systemic conditions including atherosclerosis..."

Dr. Dan Peterson of Family Dental Care in his article, "Oral Health and Your Heart" concurs with Weinberg by promulgating that, "Periodontitis seems to influence the occurrence and the severity of coronary artery disease and increases the risk of heart attack or stroke, and the study proposes two hypotheses for this occurrence. One hypothesis is that periodontal pathogens could enter the blood stream, invade the blood vessel walls and ultimately cause atherosclerosis. (Atherosclerosis is a multi-stage process set in motion when cells lining the arteries are damaged as a result of high blood pressure, smoking, toxic substances, and other agents.)" Dr. Peterson also highlights the astounding fact that the correlation between gum disease and heart attacks is considerably higher than the association between high cholesterol and heart attacks. He says that, "New studies suggest that people who have gum disease seem to be at higher risk for heart attacks, although no one knows how this relationship works.

Your oral health affects your overall health, but the studies that will find exactly why these problems are linked are still underway."

Peterson also emphasizes the point that flossing is imperative and integral to your dental and essentially systemic health. How can gum disease affect your overall health? Well, according to Peterson, "...bacteria present in infected gums can come loose and move throughout the body. The same bacteria that cause gum disease and irritate our gums might travel to your arteries."

So although the research showing the connection between poor dental hygiene and heart disease is inconclusive, it is imperative that you keep your mouth healthy and see your dentist and/or dental hygienist regularly or at least twice yearly. My dental hygienist recommended that I brush my teeth with the electronic tooth brush Sonic Care, she also related to me that the sound that it makes as you are brushing have a germ killing affect. Sonic Care can be expensive; a more affordable alternative is Spin Brush Pro Clean Sonic which essentially is just as effective. Another dental health tip that my hygienist informed me of is that flossing is even more critically important than brushing. I have personally found that when I went to see my hygienist, I discovered that my teeth had more plaque (a bacteria-containing film on a tooth) and my gums used to be more inflamed before I started flossing regularly.

"Infected gums bleed, making it easier for bacteria to enter your bloodstream," professes Dr. Peterson. "If bacteria become dislodged, the bacteria enter through cuts or sores in your mouth and travel to other parts of your body through your bloodstream... This can cause arterial plaque to accumulate in the arteries; which can cause hardening and affect blood-flow. Compromised blood-flow to your heart can cause a heart attack." Peterson also reminds us that gum disease is most definitely the result of plaque buildup. So to minimize your chances of getting gum disease which can compromise the homeostasis of your heart, remember to brush, floss, floss and floss some more on a regular basis and preferably after each meal and most definitely before you go to bed; so then you won't have to worry your head about the health of your heart.

Jacques Fleury's book: *"Sparks in the Dark: A Lighter Shade of Blue, A Poetic Memoir"* about life in Haiti & America was featured in the *Boston Globe*. Sample or buy the book at: www.lulu.com. 20% of proceeds will go to Haiti charity Partners in Health. For personal appearances or comments contact Jacques at: haitian-firefly@gmail.com.

"Based on my own personal experience I've noticed that a lot of people here in America do not consider going to the dentist or dental hygienist on a regular basis."

Global Voices:

Freedom to cross borders

Staff Writer
Street News Service

World Refugee Day (on June 20th) is dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world. From time to time mainstream media report stories about people who arrive to foreign countries with nothing but the clothes they wear. This situation often creates diplomatic problems – as it did recently between France and Italy – and fuels the debate about the best way to proceed: send people back or take them in. This discussion is often followed by one about immigration in general.

Should anyone have the right to move and live wherever they want? (and how should governments manage this?)

Name: Justine Drian
Age: 22
Occupation: Student
City of residence: Vannes, France

“I think it’s impossible for people to move as they want because it will create complicated situations in terms of employment, housing, etc. Nevertheless, we must not forget that we are dealing with people, who are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Name: Emilia Wieremiej
Age: 25
Occupation: Student
City of residence: Glasgow, Scotland

“People don’t choose in which part of the world they are born. Many times, people struggle to get groceries, pay rent and bills - they spend the time fighting for survival. We have only one life and if people make the difficult decision of leaving everything behind and start a new life in another place, where the economic situation is much better, I don’t see the reason why they shouldn’t be able to get that chance. The Government therefore should support people in this life changing decision and provide easy access to training, education and free language classes for those who may have difficulties adapting.”

Name: Abhinav Saraswat
Age: 24
Occupation: Sales Rep
City of residence: Cardiff, Wales

“In an ideal world people should be able to move anywhere the like without any restrictions regardless of their nationality, race, creed, gender etc. However, in the real world, people should be allowed immigrate without restriction if a) their lives are in imminent mortal danger, for example from a genocidal regime, or b) if they will be making a positive contribution to the country /society they’re migrating to, like for socio-economic reasons.”

Runaway Switchboard

provides youth with resources free of judgment

Megan Millard
StreetWise

The National Runaway Switchboard is a helpline for young people that might be facing homelessness, many times because they have ran away from home. Based in Chicago, the helpline gets calls from all over the USA.

A young man calls 1-800 RUNAWAY because he does not get along with his mom’s new boyfriend. He wants to know if there are any places in his area that would provide him with a place to stay for a few months until he goes off to college.

This young man represents just one of the approximately 300 calls every day received by the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS). Located in Chicago, the organization fields calls from all over the United States.

One of the National Runaway Switchboard’s volunteers searches for a resource to give the young man as he waits on the other line. While the volunteer searches for facilities in the requested area, often volunteers have no indication of where in the United States callers are located.

“We do not have caller I.D., we don’t know [where they are],” said Maureen Blaha, executive director of the NRS.

In fact, the purpose of the NRS is to provide youth with assistance without judgment. “This is a safe place to call,” Blaha said.

An overwhelming need

While it may seem like a problem that doesn’t hold much weight, the numbers are overwhelming. According to Blaha and the NRS web site, 1800Runaway.org, between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away each year.

“It’s really an overwhelming number,” Blaha said. “I think of it as a silent crisis.”

Blaha said that the statistics highlight a problem that exists throughout the country. While kidnappings and abductions may seem like a major issue, Blaha said that the number is miniscule compared to the number of youth who run away.

According to Blaha, often people are under the impression that kids who run away are troubled, being labeled as “bad kids.” She said most often the youth are running away from bad situations.

Unstable homes a factor

Many of the calls fielded by the NRS have to do with family dynamics, much like the situation of the young man mentioned above. There may be a divorce in the family or youth struggling to get along with stepparents. Additionally, calls may be tied to a youth feeling as though they have disappointed a parent. In cases with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) youth, there are some parents who do not accept the sexual orientation of the child.

Another factor to be considered is whether or not the youth was thrown out of the home or left willingly. NRS 2010 statistics collected for a Why They Run report showed that almost half (48 per-

cent) of youth described being kicked out of their home, while 30 percent said they ran away. The remaining 22 percent described their situation as being a combination of both.

Blaha said that certain situations could lead a youth to believe they could make it on their own, and then realize it is not easy.

“It’s very unsafe on the streets,” she said.

While NRS statistics reported that the most popular means of making money is panhandling, youth also reported getting a job or receiving money from a family member. The more dangerous means reported were youth becoming involved in the sex industry or selling drugs.

While NRS has found in the past that girls were more likely to call the switchboard than boys, the gap is slowly closing. Blaha believes that while boys may be less likely to reach out for help, the gap could be closing due to rapper Ludacris teaming up with the NRS to promote awareness of runaways in 2006, providing a male spokesman for the problem.

NRS volunteers discuss options for youth but also take calls from adults. A situation that NRS has found themselves dealing with in the past is when a youth calls and asks the NRS volunteer to inform her family member he or she is alright. Parents can sometimes be desperate in obtaining information that the NRS often does not have, such as the whereabouts of their child.

While Blaha said the NRS tries to reunite families when possible, it does not force such meetings. It only offers resources for youth in crisis and sometimes serves as a messenger between the two. For example, the youth can call and leave a message for a parent, should the parent choose to call. A parent can also leave a message for a youth if a youth decides to call.

Volunteer-driven

The NRS has 150 volunteers of many ages and all “walks of life.” They typically work a few hours per week and go through 40 hours of training beforehand. The NRS is always accepting new volunteers and there are classes every month of the year with the exception of April and December. Anyone interested in volunteering can call 773-289-1726.

1-800-RUNAWAY is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On March 23, the NRS launched its Live Chat service, which serves to provide assistance to youth via the web.

“Live Chat is a new service that is another option for youth and teens in crisis to get in touch with NRS online and to resources that will improve their situation,” Blaha said.

The NRS hopes they can provide an outlet for youth to get the assistance they need to stay safe and happy.

“I think all of us want our kids safe,” Blaha said.

This article is part of a special report about homeless teens in Chicago

www.streetnewsservice.org / Street News Service

Seeking Refuge in a Street Paper

Inês Santinhos Gonçalves
Street News Service

The reasons why people become street paper vendors are many and diverse. Some are homeless; others suffer mental or physical health problems, struggle with addiction or face unemployment. And some people do it because the magazines offer them the refuge they so desperately need.

Around the world, street papers have been welcoming people who felt too insecure to stay in their home lands. Whether or not they have official refugee status in their newly adopted countries, what these vendors often have in common is the fear to return to where they came from.

Marian Oshoshor does not like to talk about the reasons that took her to Austria. The Nigerian street paper vendor is cheerful and lively; she prefers to talk about her costumers and how much her German has improved since she arrived - she even offers to sing because "if you have a heavy heart, music is the best healer". But Marian, who still remembers how thin she was when she arrived in 2004, had serious reasons to fear staying in Nigeria.

She grew up in a Yoruba family (a West African ethnic group) on the Niger delta, who lived from agriculture and fishing. When the time came, Marian knew she would be subjected to female genital mutilation, since no woman in the village was spared from this traditional practice. She was afraid because she knew that many girls died during the procedure. She asked a journalist to help her escape - she couldn't guess at the time that she would one day end up working in the newspaper industry herself.

Marian is happy she escaped, but she still remembers bitterly the reaction of the Austrian authorities when she arrived: "The Austrian asylum authorities did not believe me. They thought I was lying".

Tapiwa Chemhere has a different story, one of violence and poverty, but a common thread remains: fear. He escaped with his family from Zimbabwe in 2005. "I lived in the city, but it was very violent. You were forced to support the main party, and if you didn't they would bomb your house or kill you". Tapiwa's mother decided it was no longer safe for them to stay in Zimbabwe and escaped with her four children to Australia. Their story is far from being exceptional: the economic meltdown and repressive political

regime of Robert Mugabe have led to a flood of refugees. An estimated 3.4 million Zimbabweans, a quarter of the population, had fled abroad by mid 2007.



A family of costumers

Coming to a new country might save people from a potentially dangerous situation but it is not, by any means, a magical solution for all problems. Many people struggled before and even during their work as a street paper vendor. Being a black woman in Austria, Marian was told she had only one option to make money: "Every person I asked how I could survive here said 'you have two options - prostitution in Prater, or prostitution at the West station'. But selling my body was not an option for me".

Isaac Nwankwere's problems started right upon arrival in Austria. He escaped from Nigeria, trying to flee from a violent uncle. The local church found the possible, although quite irregular, way to take him out of the country: they smuggled him onto to a ship. Isaac, who had at that

point little knowledge of the world, thought he was going somewhere else. "They told me that I was on my way to Austria. Only I didn't know the difference between Austria and Australia. I thought I was heading for Australia."

Even though the country was a bit different from what he expected - no sunny beaches or rugby fans - Isaac was happy to be in Europe. But adapting to the Austrian way of life was a challenge during the first period as a street paper vendor. "When I started selling the Augustin [street paper] I was a black man in a country of white people and the norms of conduct, everything was different from what I had seen before in Africa. I approached my costumers the way I was used to in Nigeria. I put on a lot of pressure. After two or three complaints found their way to the Augustin office I changed my behaviour. Since then there have, luckily, been no complaints".

Today Isaac has a different problem: he is still single. "I just can't believe that I've been in Vienna for so long and still don't have a girlfriend. Every woman in Austria is taken!" he complains. He is thankful, though, for the affection he gets from his costumers: "I want to thank my costumers. If I knew all their names I would name them one by one. The Austrians are very, very nice people, very kind. A big thank you to Augustin too!"

Marian, who works for the same street paper, shares the feeling. The

Nigerian refers to her regular costumers as "family". And she has her reasons for it. "One man brings me tea almost every day, because I have to protect myself against catching a cold, he says". Marian has almost ten pairs of gloves at home because people assume that African women are more vulnerable to the cold. One costumer, who learned from Marian's identity card that she had the same birthday as him, invited her to his birthday party. And a teacher gave her what she considers her "biggest gift": she paid for German lessons, so that Marian could improve her language skills.

On the other side of the globe, in Australia, Tapiwa got in touch with street paper The Big Issue Australia, and soon started selling the magazine. He says the costumers play an important role in supporting street paper vendors in difficult times. "I work for my costumers. Some say 'I'll see on Thursday' so I make sure I'm there. I would like to thank my costumers for helping me out. Sometimes, if you chat with someone selling the street paper, it makes our day. It makes us feel very encouraged."

www.streetnewsservice.org / Street News Service



Homophones



Add or change one letter in each word altering its meaning without altering the way it sounds.

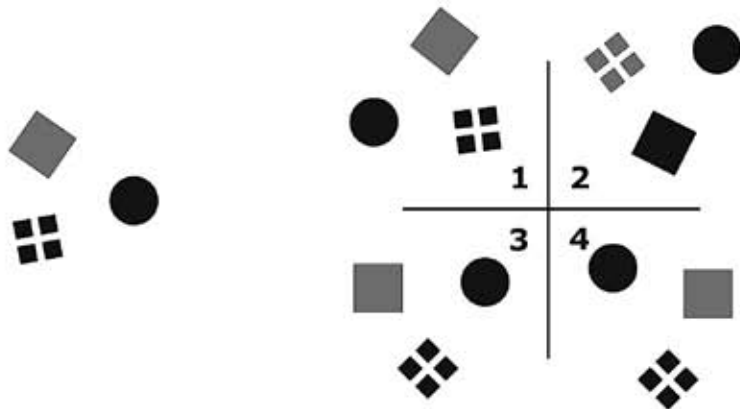
Sudoku

	8			4				
		4	3	7	5	8		
	3						6	
1			4		8			5
2				1				4
8			7		3			9
	9						2	
		7	5	8	2	9		
				3			5	

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains every number from 1 to 9.

Vertigo

The image on the left has been flipped over and twirled around a bit. Is it 1, 2, 3 or 4 that best represents the end result?



Heeding a Healthy Home

Efforts to ban DHMO have been going on since 1989. Have cooler heads prevailed? Are the chemicals below really safe in our households? And just what is DHMO — dihydrogen monoxide? And these other chemicals we consume? Well, that's what you're going find out. But, be careful, . . . and be safe.

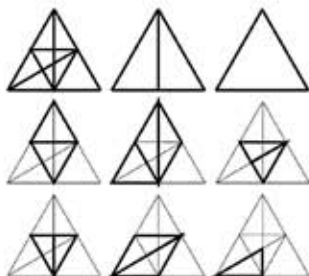
A Dihydrogen Monoxide
B Acetic Acid
C Sodium Chloride
D Acetyl Salicyclic Acid
E Sodium Hydrogen Carbonate
F Potassium Hydrogen Tartrate
G Carbonic Acid

Ten Keystrokes

Create a ten-letter word beginning with **T** and ending with **R** using only this row of letters from the keyboard. You are permitted to "type" a letter more than once.



Solutions to last issue's puzzles



homeless
home(s) hole(s) heme
lees mole(s) hems
hose(s) helm(s) heels(s)
sole(s) mess sees
elms some seel(s)
eels moss else
ohms mosh(es) shole(s)
shoe(s) hoess shoel
seem(s) lose(s) mesh
less loss shmo(es)

A Afghan
B Scottish Terrier
C Golden Retriever
D Great Dane
E Boxer
F Cocker Spaniel
G Dachshund
H Bull Terrier
I Airdale Terrier
J Collie
K Malamute
L Boston Terrier
M Welsh Corgi
N Irish Terrier
O Westie
P Bloodhound

3	5	9	8	7	6	2	1	4
1	6	8	4	2	9	3	5	7
7	2	4	3	5	1	6	9	8
5	9	3	6	8	4	1	7	2
8	1	2	7	3	5	9	4	6
4	7	6	5	1	2	8	3	5
2	4	7	1	6	3	5	8	9
9	3	5	2	4	8	7	6	1
6	8	1	5	9	7	4	2	3

Food

DAILY MEALS:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Community meals: 3pm weekdays, and 5pm Sundays (no Saturdays).
Pine Street Inn
444 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-482-4944
Breakfast: 6 a.m.; brown bag lunches during the day;
Dinner: 5 p.m.; Chicken truck: 11:30 a.m.
Rosie's Place (women & children only, no boys over age 11)
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Dinner: 4:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
St. Francis House
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Emergency sandwiches: Weekdays 2:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Lunch: 12 p.m.
Women's Lunch Place (women & children only, no boys over age 14, male presence discouraged)
67 Newbury St., Boston., 617-267-0200
Open Mon. – Sat., 7 a.m. – 2p.m.
www.womenslunchplace.org

WEEKLY MEALS

Monday:

Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Food pantry: 9-11am (except holidays). Bring proof of address.
Church of the Holy Resurrection
64 Harvard Ave., Allston, 617-787-7625
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. and take-out.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church. 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853. 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday:

Church of the Advent
30 Brimmer St., Boston, 617-523-2377 6 p.m.
First Parish Unitarian Church
3 Church St., Cambridge, 617-876-7772
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)
Faith Kitchen, Faith Lutheran Church
311 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-354-0414
6:30 p.m. (second & last Tuesday of every month)

Wednesday:

Salvation Army 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge,
617-547-3400 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday:

Christ Church, Zero Garden St. Cambridge,
617-876-0200 6 p.m. *St. James Church*
1991 Mass. Ave, Cambridge
The Women's Meal (Women and children welcome)
5 p.m. – 7 p.m. (food pantry 3 days/week)
Union Baptist Church
874 Main St., Cambridge, 617-864-6885. 5 p.m.

Friday:

Arlington St. Church
351 Boylston St., Boston, 617-536-7050 5 p.m.
Food Not Bombs
Boston Common (near Park St. T station), 617-522-8277
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Mass. Ave. Baptist Church. 146 Hampshire St., Cambridge,
617-868-4853 6 p.m. -- 7:30 p.m.

Saturday:

Pilgrim Church 540 Columbia Rd, Dorchester
approx 8:45 (*Boston Commons, near fountain*)
We serve soup, pasta, coffee, juice, pastries, sandwiches, and clothing once a month.
12-1:30 pm
We offer a free community lunch, it is a cafe style, and we serve the guests, no standing in line. The meals are hot and made with love by our very talented chef

Sunday:

Food Not Bombs. 955 Mass Ave (617) 787-3436

Central Square Cambridge on Sundays from 3-5pm.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

Greater Boston Food Bank, 617-427-5200
Serves non-profit organizations such as agencies, shelters, etc.
Office hours: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Project Bread • 617-723-5000; Hotline 1-800-645-8333
Referrals to food pantries throughout the city
Somerville Food Pantry • 617-776-7687
Food pantry: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Wed 12 p.m. -- 4 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m. -- 4 p.m.
Somerville residents only. Those unable to use other pantries due to disability may call and ask for the Project Soup Delivery Coordinator.

Brookline Food Pantry
15 St. Paul St., Brookline, 617-566-4953
Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sat. 2 p.m. -- 4 p.m.
Brookline residents only. Second-time visitors must present a letter from an advocate confirming that they are in need of food services.

CEOC (Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission)
11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge, 617-868-2900
Food pantry: Mon, Wed 4 p.m. -- 6 p.m.; Tue 12 p.m. -- 2 p.m.; Thu 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Closed Fri.

East End House
105 Spring St., Cambridge, 617-876-4444
Food pantry: Tue 9 a.m. -- 2 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m.
Offers assistance in filling out food stamp applications (call for appointment).

Margaret Fuller Houses
71 Cherry St., Cambridge, 617-547-4680
Food pantry: Wed. 5 p.m. -- 7 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m. & 6 p.m. -- 7:30 p.m.; Fri & Sat 9 a.m. -- 12 p.m.

Pentecostal Tabernacle Church • 617-661-0222
Food pantry by appointment only; no deliveries or walk-ins; referrals to other food pantries

Salvation Army
402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400
Cambridge and Somerville residents only.
Food pantry: 9 a.m. -- 3 p.m. & by appointment
St. Francis House
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211
Food pantry: Mon. – Fri. 10 a.m. -- 11 a.m.

Sign up at the Counseling Desk in the St. Francis House Day Center
St. James Church
1191 Mass. Ave, Cambridge
Food pantry: Tues. 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; Thurs. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

St. Paul's Ane Church
85 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, 617-661-1110
Food pantry: Wed. 12 p.m. -- 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Western Ave. Baptist Church
299 Western Ave., Cambridge, 617-661-0433
Food pantry: Every second Wed., 10 a.m.

Zinberg Clinic Pantry at Cambridge Hospital 617-665-1606
For clinic patients with HIV / AIDS only.
Food pantry: Mon. – Fri. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Fair Foods \$2 a bag;

CAMBRIDGE, St. Paul's Church
29 Mt. Auburn St
Harvard Sq. Red Line
Saturdays 10-11
SOMERVILLE, Cobble Hill Apts
84 Washington St. Back parking lot (near Sullivan Sq.)
Every other Wed. 11:30-1
Mt. Pleasant Apts. 70 Perkins St. (off Broadway)
Every other Wed. 1:30 - 2:30
Hearty Meals for All
Somerville Community Baptist Church
31 College Ave. Somerville, MA 02144
Free Community Meals the second Friday of every month at 6:30pm

Homeless Concerns

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen, space, children's room, and more.
Walk-ins welcome.

Women & children only (no boys over age 12)
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, Sat 10am-3pm.

Cambridge Multi-Service Center
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-349-6340
City-run agency with additional community non-profit partners. Works with Cambridge families in shelters, provides shelter referrals and other housing assistance. Employs housing specialists for elderly and disabled.
Office hours: Mon. 8:30 a.m. -- 8 p.m.; Tue., Wed., Thu. 8:30 a.m. -- 5 p.m.; Fri. 8:30 a.m. -- 12 p.m. Walk-ins accepted.
Cardinal Medeiros Center
25 Isabella St., Boston, 617-619-6960
Day center for homeless adults (50 years & older); mental health & nursing staff; help with housing searches.
Lunch served at 11:45 a.m.
Office hours: Mon. - Thu. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Caspar
240 Albany St., Cambridge, 617-661-0600
Open 24 hrs / day; emergency shelter open 4:30 p.m. -- 8 a.m.; Clients who leave in the morning may not return until 3 p.m.; Clients staying multiple nights must prove recent local residency.
CLASP (Community Legal Assistance Services Project)
19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-552-0623
Free legal clinic for Cambridge homeless at the Multi-Service Center every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

Ecclesia Ministries
67 Newbury Street, Boston., 617-552-0623
Weekly Schedule for the Common Cathedral:
Sunday
- Worship at Brewer's Fountain on Boston Common, 1 pm
- Gospel Reflection at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St., 2:30 p.m. -- 4 p.m.

Monday
- Lunch at Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 11:30 a.m. --1 p.m.
-Eucharist & Healing (St. Paul's Cathedral) 1 p.m.
- Common Fellowship in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2 p.m. --3 p.m.
Wednesday
- Common Art at the Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, 10 a.m. -- 3 p.m.
Friday
- Common Cinema in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2:30 p.m. -- 5 p.m.

Horizons for Homeless Children
617-445-1480; www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org
Horizons for Homeless Children is seeking volunteers to interact and play with children living in family, teen parent, and domestic violence shelters in Greater Boston. We offer daytime and evening shifts, so there is likely to be one that fits your schedule. A commitment of 2 hours a week for 6 months is required. The next training session will be Sat., Sept. 27, 9:30 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.

Medical Walk-in Unit at Mass General Hospital
617-726-2707
Provides minor medical care for adults. Patients are seen in order of arrival. MGH accepts most insurances but requires copayments.
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat., Sun., Holidays 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed Thanksgiving & Christmas
Boston Rescue Mission
39 Kingston ST., Boston
Safe & Healthy men's overnight shelter program.

Rosie's Place
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322
Women and children only (no boys over age 11)
Open 7 days a week; provides help with housing, medical care, job training, financial aid and education, legal services, rape crisis counselors, health specialists, and more.

St. Francis House

39 Boylston Street, Boston, 617-542-4211
Meals offered 365 days / yr.; food pantry open weekdays. Offers a mailroom, open art studio, clothing lottery, computer library, support groups such as AA, showers, telephones, toothbrushes & razors, medical clinic, counseling & mental health services, housing counseling & stabilization services, & a women's center.
For more details on these services and for their specific times visit www.stfranchishouse.org
Starlight Ministries. 617-262-4567
Outreach van with food, clothing, blankets and worship
Hours: Wed. 8 p.m. by Park Street T station on the Boston Common.
Streetlight Outreach
Wednesdays at 8:00 PM
Harvard T-Station (The Pit); Porter Square T-Station
Volunteers work weekly to serve the homeless who live in Harvard and Porter Squares. Volunteer teams give away warm food and beverages, clothing and counsel to those in need. Streetlight volunteers also lead an outdoor worship service for the entire community.

The Women's Center
46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807
Computers, kitchen and rooms. Walk-ins welcome.
Women & children only (no boys over age 16).
Hours: Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-- 8 p.m., Sat 10 a.m. -- 3 p.m.
On The Rise
341 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-497-7968
Women only. Home-base during the day and advocacy services. Open six days / week. First-time visitors, call ahead or stop by Mon-Sat, 8-2pm.

The Outdoor Church of Cambridge
The Outdoor Church of Cambridge is an outdoor ministry to homeless men and women in Cambridge. Prayer services and pastoral assistance outdoors in all seasons and all weather. Short prayer services in Porter Square, under the mobile sculpture near the T station, at 9:00 AM and on the Cambridge Common, near the tall Civil War monument and directly across from Christ Church Cambridge on Garden Street, at 1:00 PM every Sunday, throughout the year. Sandwiches, pastry, juice and clean white socks available in Harvard Square and Central Square. (978)456-0047, 39 Brown Road, Harvard, Massachusetts 01451 jedman-nis@charter.net; www.theoutdoorchurch.net.

Victory Programs, Inc.
www.vpi.org. Short and long-term residential substance use disorder treatment programs for individuals and families; affordable housing opportunities for eligible individuals; HIV / AIDS case management. Sites throughout Boston
Please call for more information. (617) 541-0222 ext. 626

Legal Aid:
Lawyers Clearinghouse, 617-723-0885
Shelter Legal Services (Newton), 617-965-0449

The Homeless Eyecare Network of Boston (HEN-Boston)
is a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining a constantly undated network of affordable and free eyecare services for the homeless. If you need an eye exam or glasses, please visit our website, www.hen-boston.org.

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CJPC Conference on Rational Justice:

June 30, 2011



The Road to Rational Justice in Massachusetts conference will focus on the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs) across all agencies

in the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth. EBPs represent a broad swath of policies and programs created by scientific evaluation of empirical, i.e., real world data, the intentions of which are to promote public safety, reduce recidivism, limit incarceration and overcrowding of correctional facilities, and reduce costs. Representatives Carolyn Dykema and Jonathan Hecht have sponsored a bill (H.3286) that would create a commission to study the implementation of EBPs in Massachusetts. This initiative will be heard before the

Joint Committee on the Judiciary on July 7, 2011.

Who Will Speak:

Len Engel, Senior Policy Analyst at Community Resources for Justice/ the Crime & Justice Institute.

William Carbone, Executive Director at the Court Support Services Division in Connecticut.

Representative Jonathan Hecht, State Legislator for the 29th Middlesex District (Watertown & Cambridge), and co-sponsor of H.3286, the Evidence-Based Practice bill.

Sandra McCroom, Undersecretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Ronald Corbett, Commissioner of the Department of Probation in Massachusetts

Dr. James Byrne, Professor of Criminal Justice at UMASS Lowell.

Fred Smith, Director of Program Development, Research and Evaluation at St. Francis House.

Plus a performance by And Still We Rise Productions, a collaborative theater project dedicated to healing, public awareness and social change through empowering the voices of formerly incarcerated people and their loved ones.

Where:

The Boston Foundation, at 75 Arlington St., 10th floor, Boston, MA 02116.

When:

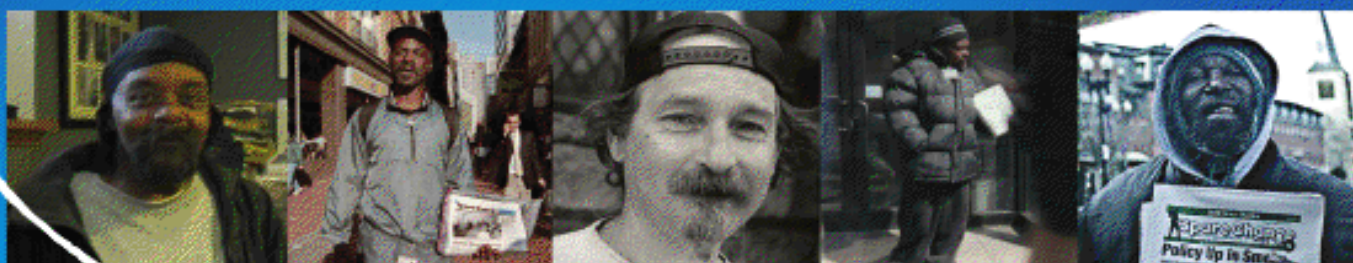
Thursday, June 30, from 9:15am until 1:30pm.

What:

Keynote addresses and presentations, a panel discussion and a performance by And Still We Rise. Light food and refreshments will be served.

There is no charge for the conference, but donations of all sizes will be welcomed and greatly appreciated.

To RSVP, please visit <http://roadtorationaljusticeconference.eventbrite.com>



PLEASE JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 19 YEARS

Helping People Help Themselves

SPARE CHANGE NEWS

HOMELESS EMPOWERMENT PROJECT ANNUAL EVENT

Saturday, June 18, 2011 • 5 pm to 8 pm

Speeches from members • Vendor Awards • Food & more!

Live & Silent Auctions • Fashion Show

\$25.00/Person • \$40.00/Couple

ywca

7 Temple Street • Cambridge, MA 02139
Take MBTA Red Line to Central Square